

REMARKS

As of the date of the Office Action, claims 1-7 were pending, and claims 6 and 7 have been withdrawn from consideration. Also, claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

I. Preliminary matters

A. Objection to the title

The Examiner has objected to the title because it is allegedly not descriptive. Applicants have amended the title to more fully describe an illustrative, non-limiting embodiment of the invention, and submit that the language of the new title does limit the scope of the claims.

B. Objection to the drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings because Fig. 1 should be labeled with the designation "PRIOR ART". Applicants are submitting herewith a substitute Fig. 1 having such designation and submits that the objection is overcome.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants submit that the amendments to claim 2 overcome this rejection.

**III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S.P. 6,404,728 to Shinozuka et al.
("Shinozuka")**

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shinozuka. Applicants submit that the claims are patentable over the cited reference.

A. Claim 1

Claim 1 relates to a lens drive device that comprises a lens holder and drive coils, and the lens holder is molded integrally with connection wires to connect the drive coils. The Examiner contends that column 8 of Shinozuka suggests such feature, but Applicants respectfully disagree.

For example, column 7, line 63, to column 8, line 6, states that a focusing coil 12 is fixed to a rib 8 of the lens holder 3 and that tracking coils 13 are provided in the regions between stays 10 and end portions of the focusing coil 12. Also, the regions in which the tracking coils 13 are located are filled with an epoxy resin. Such disclosure does not mention anything about connection wires being integrally molded with the lens holder 3.

Also, based on the express description contained in Shinozuka, connection wires are not integrally molded with the lens holder 3. For example, column 11, lines 47-62, of the reference describe how the coils 12 and 13 are fixed to the lens holder 3 via the resin. After the coils 12 and 13 are fixed to the holder 3, the wires connecting to the coils 12 and 13 are installed. Specifically, column 12, lines 10-20, states:

Thereafter, a pair of flexible wiring boards 48, used for electrical connection between the coils 12, 13 and the wires 6, are adhered to the front face of the lens holder 3. The flexible wiring boards sandwich the objective lens and are located at

those portions of the lens holder which are ends as viewed in the tracing direction. The flexible wiring boards 48 are prepared as an integrally molded member in the state where they are connected by a board holding member 49. This board holding member 49 is removed after the integrally molded member including the flexible wiring boards is assembly with reference to the lens holder 3. Due to this process, the flexible wiring boards 48, which are fine members, are very easy to handle. In addition, since the board holding member 49 is removed after the adhesion step, the movable portions can be light in weight, thus enabling high-speed driving. Terminals (not shown) of the coils 12 and 13 are soldered to the flexible wiring boards 48.

(Emphasis added). As noted above, the flexible wiring boards 48, which contain wires connecting the coils 12 and 13 are adhered to the lens holder 3 after the regions in which the tracking coils 13 are located are filled with an epoxy resin. Therefore, Shinozuka does not disclose or suggest the claimed connecting wires integrally molded with the holder 3.

In addition, the Examiner contends that the elastic wires 6 disclosed in the reference correspond to the wire-form elastic members 6 recited in claim 1. Therefore, the wires 6 do not teach the claimed connecting wires.

In light of the description above, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over Shinozuka.

B. Claim 2

Since claim 2 depends upon claim 1, Applicants submit that it is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

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C. Claim 3

Since claim 3 recites features that are analogous to the features recited in claim 1, Applicants submit that claim 3 is patentable for similar reasons.

D. Claim 4

Since claim 4 depends upon claim 3, Applicants submit that it is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

E. Claim 5

Since claim 5 recites features that are analogous to the features recited in claim 1, Applicants submit that claim 5 is patentable for similar reasons.

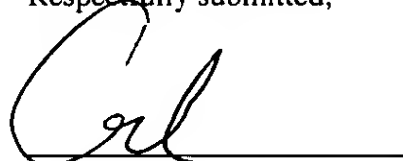
IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

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APPENDIX
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE TITLE:

The title is changed as follows:

LENS DRIVE DEVICE[, SUSPENSION UNIT FOR LENS DRIVE DEVICE,]HAVING
METAL WIRE-LIKE ELASTIC MEMBERS, AND METHOD FOR MANUFACTURING THE
SAME

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

2. (Amended) A lens drive device according to Claim 1 , wherein said lens holder is molded integrally with said connection wires while containing at least portions of said connection wires and while being exposed at its two ends, so that said exposed portions [may be]are connection terminals to said drive coils.